

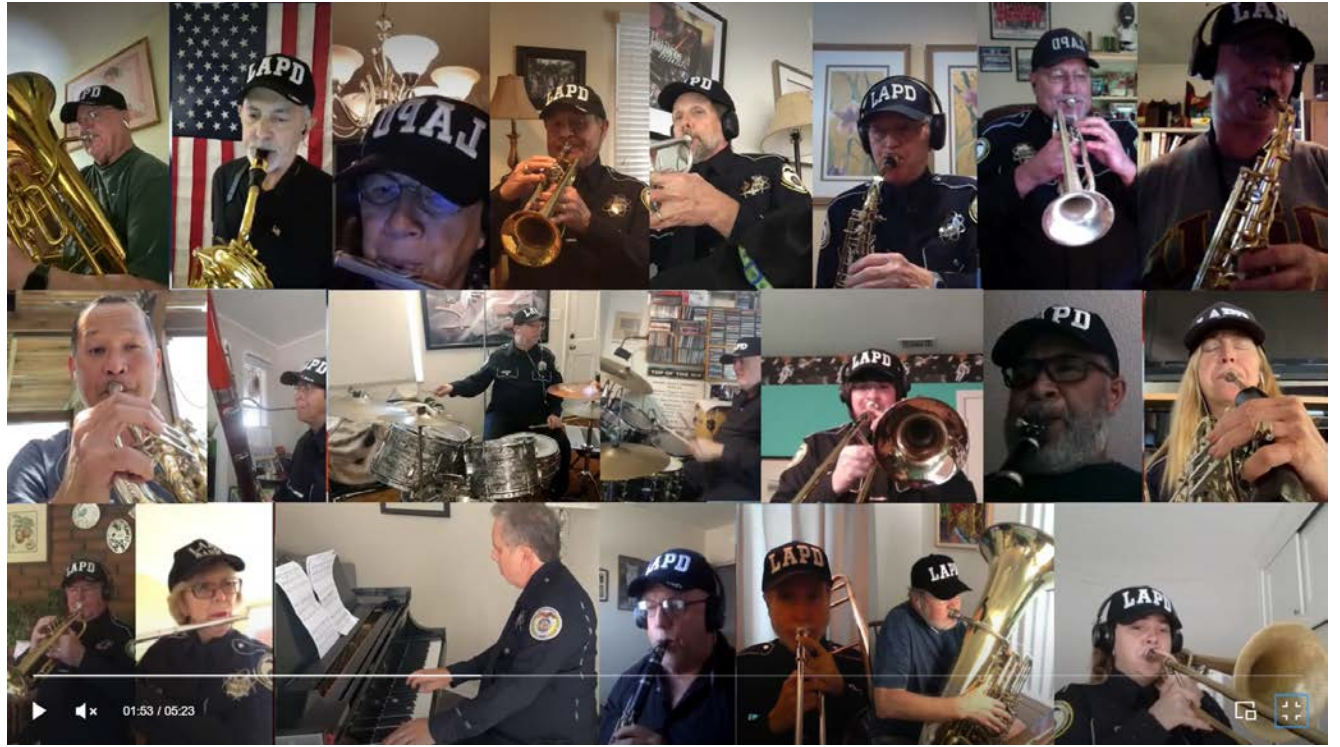
for your Information

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LAPD Band

by Christina Challey

We are in the middle of a sea change that is affecting all of our lives in many seen and unseen ways. The coronavirus pandemic has added to the already challenging mission the men and women of the LAPD shoulder every day. The Department's motto, "To Protect and to Serve," came out of a 1955 effort to generate a maxim that would encapsulate the Police Academy's mission. It was soon thereafter adopted as the entire Department's motto. The Los Angeles Police Concert Band has not held a rehearsal, or performed at a recruit graduation, Department special event or public appearance since the Mayor's "Safer-at-Home" Order went into effect. In an effort to live out The Band's motto of "To Perform and to Serve," our conductor and musical director, Maestro Richard Allen, hit upon a brilliant idea. Corporations, governments and families are getting together virtually to conduct



The Band performing "The Stars and Stripes Forever" from home.

business and celebrate. Why not bring the Band together online to record a performance? He chose a John Philip Sousa work that the U.S. Congress designated as

the National March of the United States, "The Stars and Stripes Forever." Maestro Allen set about assembling a package of music and other pertinent information he emailed to Band members for their review.

In a little less than a week, Band members were emailing back their video and audio recordings of their parts of the Sousa composition. Maestro Allen assembled and synched all of them into the performance you will see. If the performance is cohesive and moving, it is the result of his leadership, patience and creativity. In his words, "It was the Band that made it work. It wasn't me." Principal Trumpet Michael Rotman said he was glad to be challenged to bring a new level of concentration and focus to his performance. Oboist Stan Levine said it "felt good to me as a way to continue to be a part of the group."

The response to that first project was so overwhelmingly positive that Maestro Allen decided to try another one. This time he dedicated it to all first responders. This is the Band's way of thanking, honoring and recognizing those most essential workers in their selfless devotion to their chosen, demanding professions. On first

seeing the finished products, Judy Reiter, who doubles on piccolo and flute, "was so pleased with what maestro did with the video."

Executive Director Jim Starr knows how valuable these performances are. "This was a unique opportunity to provide an in-home concert," he said. The spirit of the Band comes through the technology."

Here are links to the Los Angeles Police Concert Band's Facebook page, where you can see these performances of "The Stars and Stripes Forever": www.facebook.com/lasown/videos/253484009037339 and "God Bless the USA," with vocals by "The Singing Cop," Jim Starr, and Band director of operations, Christina Challey. The video can also be viewed on our new YouTube channel, LASOWN:

www.youtube.com/channel/UCKE2XAtqCwdzkJtaSZcZY5A/ featured.

For more information about the Band, see our website at www.lasown.com and contact Jim Starr, executive director, at sngcop@aol.com. For greatly appreciated donations, please go to www.lapolice-foundation.org, and in the comments box, put "For the Band." ❖



Michael Ellington

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